

July 27, 2012

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We are writing to express our concern regarding criticism Rep. Michele Bachmann has received for requesting information from the Obama Administration concerning possible links between the Muslim Brotherhood, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the U.S. intelligence community and the U.S. Departments of State and Justice.

Neither Rep. Bachmann nor Reps. Louie Gohmert, Trent Franks, Tom Rooney or Lynn Westmoreland, in their letter of June 13 to the Inspectors General of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice and the Department of State ¹, insulted any individuals nor made antagonistic comments about the Islamic religion. Rather, pursuant to public statements by some of the Obama Administration's own officials and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) testimony given in U.S. courts ², they have raised legitimate questions about the ongoing contacts between organizations linked (by our government itself) to Islamism and federal agencies and officials.

As members of the House Intelligence, Judiciary, and Armed Services committees, the five signatories of the letters referenced above have relevant legislative standing to ask the questions they have submitted. Additionally, it is surprising and disappointing to us that Rep. Bachmann and her colleagues would be criticized, instead of applauded, for bravely demanding answers to matters essential to the safety of the American people and our Armed Forces.

Organizations that credibly are reported to be engaged in or supportive of activities that undermine the security of the United States, whether through acts of terrorism, efforts to introduce Sharia law into local, state, or federal governance, or the influence of public policy commensurate with the interests of Islamist groups or governments, merit more than mere verbal concern. They demand careful scrutiny and, should such scrutiny prove their danger, prompt and decisive action.

Instead, some of her own Republican colleagues have assailed Rep. Bachmann for asking the questions she raised. U.S. Sen. John McCain said on the Senate floor that her State Department letter was "nothing less than an unwarranted and unfounded attack on an honorable citizen (Ms. Huma Abedin)."³ U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham and Scott Brown have also made public comments disparaging her efforts.

Much of the media coverage of the letters written by Rep. Bachmann and her colleagues has inaccurately implied that they constitute accusations or suspicion of troubling connections between Ms. Abedin and organizations that sponsor or condone terrorism or the introduction of Sharia law into our legal system. This inaccurate coverage has naturally resulted in widespread misunderstanding of what the letters actually said. That may have been a factor in your own statement that "accusations like this being thrown around are pretty dangerous."⁴ Rep. Bachmann and her colleagues accused Ms. Abedin of nothing. Rather, questions about her family's extensive

and long-time affiliations with the Muslim Brotherhood were asked by Rep. Bachmann and her colleagues. In our view, given Ms. Abedin's high post in the State Department and close personal relationship with our Secretary of State, such inquiries warrant answers, not opprobrium.

No one is asserting that Ms. Abedin is a security threat. However, given the very public policy and political positions of her mother and other family members, it is only wise to ask if their views have influenced hers and, if so, in what way they might be affecting her work in the State Department. For example, it is worth knowing if the State Department followed its own security clearance standards regarding Ms. Abedin given her familial relations with people in the Muslim Brotherhood.

Members of Congress take an oath to a Constitution that has its viability contingent on the security of the nation whose government it informs. Rep. Bachmann and her colleagues have asked well-documented, specific, and serious questions about issues and personnel whose relationships with senior federal officials or branches of the federal government could be animated or influenced by groups affiliated with, or a philosophy grounded in, radical Islam. This is not only within their right as Members of Congress but is necessitated by the risk these groups and individuals might impose to our country.

Many of us have had the privilege of serving in elective or appointive office or positions of public leadership. We believe Rep. Bachmann has shown good judgment, undeniable courage, and great patriotism in sending the letters for which she is, by some, being castigated. We are grateful for her leadership.

We would be pleased to meet with you or the appropriate members of your staff to discuss these matters at your convenience. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

David Barton, Founder & President, WallBuilders
Gary Bauer, President, American Values
Hon. J. Kenneth Blackwell, former U.S. Ambassador, U.N. Human Rights Council
Phil Burrell, Chairman, Citizens for Community Values Action
T. Kenneth Cribb, former Domestic Advisor to President Reagan
James Dobson, Founder & President, FamilyTalk Radio
Becky Norton Dunlop, former Deputy Assistant to President Reagan
Stuart Epperson, Co-Founder and Chairman, Salem Communications
Colin Hanna, President, Let Freedom Ring
David McIntosh, former member of Congress, Indiana
Edwin Meese III, former Attorney General of the United States
Star Parker, Founder & President, Center for Urban Renewal and Education
Tony Perkins, President, Family Research Council
Robert (Bob) Reccord, Executive Director, Council for National Policy
Alfred Regnery, President, The Paul Revere Project
Mathew D. Staver, Chairman, Liberty Counsel
Tim Wildmon, President, American Family Association

1 Signers of the letter include: U.S. Reps. Michele Bachmann, Tom Rooney, and Lynn Westmoreland (members of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; the Armed Services Committee (U.S. Rep. Trent Franks, Rooney) and the Judiciary Committee (Franks and U.S. Rep. Louie Gohmert). Additionally, Rep. Gohmert is Vice Chair of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

2 See *Dallas Morning News*, <http://crimeblog.dallasnews.com/2008/10/fbi-cair-is-a-front-group-and.html/>; letter from U.S. Asst. Atty. Gen. Ronald Welch to U.S. Rep. Sue Myrick, Feb. 12, 2010, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/360.pdf>; comments of White House official George Selim, <http://dailycaller.com/2012/06/08/administration-admits-to-hundreds-of-meetings-with-jihad-linked-group/>.

3 http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressOffice.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=9acf4627-0fad-89d1-d5d3-dda642179bca

4 <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/07/19/politics/boehner-bachmann/>